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# THE COTTON INSECT SCOUT

—HOW HE CAN HELP YOU



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EXTENSION SERVICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# THE COTTON INSECT SCOUT

## —How He Can Help You

### Why a Cotton Scout?

Hiring a trained cotton scout is one of the best investments you can make in your cotton production program.

Profits in cotton production depend upon effective and economical insect control, but controlling cotton insects is a delicately balanced operation that requires expert know-how. It does not necessarily mean cutting the insect population to zero, but rather reducing it below the level where it causes economic damage. You should apply insecticides only when this "economic threshold level" of the pest is reached. How do you know when that is? That's one thing the cotton scout can tell you.

By scouting your fields weekly from the first of June to mid-September to check on population densities and growth stages of both destructive and beneficial insects, this expert can supply the information you need for a sound control program.

### Information You Need

How will you gain by paying a scout \$1.00 to \$1.50 per acre for the season to check on your cotton? A scout who has completed a special 3 to 4 day intensive shortcourse conducted by the Extension entomologist can give you precise information on:

- When the insect infestation in your crop is large enough to warrant starting a control program. Many growers start treating their cotton when their neighbors do. Consequently, many start too early. In doing so they kill off many beneficial insects, which sometimes results in a build-up of bollworms.
- When to expect a “hatch out” of boll weevils and/or bollworms.
- How long to continue the control program in the fall.
- How to utilize and protect beneficial insects.

Scouts perform another service. They give you a weekly written insect report on *each field*. You can then select a recommended insecticide from the State Extension Guide and can either apply the insecticide with your own equipment or arrange with a custom applicator to do it.

In 1967, State Extension entomologists had organized cotton insect scouting programs in seven States. In that year, 321 of these scouts were trained by Extension and utilized by growers. By 1970, organized scouting programs were operating in nine States. That year, 402 scouts were trained and scouted 504,205 acres in those States. In 1971, ten States—Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas—trained 628 scouts who scouted 877,225 acres.

Scouting cotton to determine the need for control not only cuts your production costs and increases yields but also reduces the total insecticide impact on the ecosystem—meaning less pollution in the environment.

Check with your county agent and Extension entomologist about obtaining this valuable service.

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*Use Pesticides Safely*

**FOLLOW THE LABEL**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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